



THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY

Intentional Sustainability Community Benchmarking

The Ohio State University, School of Environment & Natural Resources,
EEDS Capstone Course

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Executive Summary

Project Goal

The Exploratory Research Groups (ERGs) sponsored by the Sustainability Institute at The Ohio State University (OSU) are dedicated to exploring sustainability and discovering new areas of sustainability research at OSU. We are a group of four students within the Environment, Economy, Development, and Sustainability (EEDS) major, taking part in a capstone project in response to an ERG's request for "Intentional Sustainability Community Benchmarking." The purpose of our project is to explore the possibilities and appropriate models for developing an intentional sustainability community at OSU. Our goal is to gather information and start developing the vision for an intentional community at OSU that focuses on learning, sustainable living, and mental health for students and faculty.

Research Objectives

Our team established three research objectives to investigate the possibility of establishing an intentional community at OSU. First, identify similar communities and their challenges and successes. We conducted case studies on four intentional communities including the Denison Homestead, Oregon Extension Program, Gould Farm, and Yale Divinity Living Village, and conducted key informant interviews on Oregon Extension and Gould Farms. We learned about the establishment, operation, and management of these communities, as well as their advantages and disadvantages, providing us a good reference for OSU to establish its own intentional community. Second, explore the function of similar communities at OSU and their challenges. We conducted key informant interviews with ERG members and case studies on two learning communities at OSU: SUSTAINS and ENR Scholars. By learning about these

communities, we found obstacles to building an intentional community at OSU that need to be overcome and resolved: community location, adequate funding, and lack of support. Third, examine the level of interest in such a community among OSU undergraduates and discern which elements are most appealing. We conducted a survey and sent it to multiple sources to be distributed among OSU undergraduate students. Our survey results revealed the majors of respondents and their interests and thoughts on this community, which help us to consider what qualities need to be prioritized and what issues need to be addressed in building an intentional community at OSU.

Recommendation

Based on our research and analysis, we recommend the following key practices for building and operating an intentional sustainability community at OSU. The community needs to set a common goal and focus on sustainable living and mental health. Weekly meals and involvement events can create a good opportunity for people from different backgrounds to communicate and learn from each other. We recommend juniors and seniors join this community to earn credits and to have at least one full-time staff champion for the project. We also proposed three possible locations for the community. First, Waterman Living Lab has the possibility of repurposing existing buildings, convenient transportation options to campus, and space to farm and grow food. Second, Don Scott Farms has more space than Waterman but would require the creation of a shuttle route to campus. Third, repurposing an urban space might work if such space was available, and it would provide opportunities to improve sustainability in urban space and closer to campus.

Introduction

Our project responds to the Exploratory Research Group¹ (ERG) at OSU that is looking to create an intentional sustainability community on campus. With the motivation of building such a community at OSU, the focus of our project is to do preliminary benchmarking of similar communities at other universities, examine the niche for such a community at OSU, and explore the level of interest among OSU undergraduates. We set up three research objectives to explore the possibility of establishing this type of community.

Objective One was to identify best practices from similar communities and how each community had been created. We focused on four case studies of Denison Homestead, the Oregon Extension Program, Gould Farm, and Yale Divinity Living Village. We gained additional information about the Oregon Extension through an interview with Jamie Skillen and interviewed Brian Snyder to learn additional details about Gould Farm.

Objective Two was to explore how communities at OSU function and uncover any likely challenges that might arise in developing a community at OSU. We conducted case studies and key informant interviews with ERG members and learned about two similar communities already at OSU: SUSTAINS and ENR Scholars, to learn more about the opportunities and challenges that might be present at OSU regarding creating and developing a new community.

Objective Three was to examine the level of interest of OSU undergraduates in an intentional community. We conducted a survey of undergraduates and conducted statistical analysis on the data of all respondents to understand their majors, their interest level in such a community, and what elements encourage or discourage them to join this community.

¹ <https://si.osu.edu/forfaculty/ERG/IntentionalSustainabilityCommunity>

Based on all of our information and data analysis, we summarized some desirable and avoidable aspects from other communities and suggested some feasible recommendations for building an intentional sustainability community at OSU. Based on our various case studies, we believe that achieving this community requires setting common goals and community activities to help people achieve their personal values and work towards a common goal. Based on our interviews and as a way to portray what might work at OSU, we also propose three options for where OSU could locate such a community, each with its own advantages and disadvantages. To sum up, this report describes our research objectives and findings and provides constructive recommendations for creating this community. Our results are the first phase study of the opportunities at OSU to develop an intentional community, and it is designed to allow subsequent researchers to build on our recommendations and data.

Research Objective 1

Our first objective was to perform case studies of several similar communities at other universities. This was to examine how they functioned successfully and how they were established. We wanted to look at aspects such as funding, how the community functions day-to-day, and how they govern their community. We focused our research on communities recommended by the ERG members as good models for OSU to consider. We examined the Oregon Extension Program in the Oregon Cascades, the Denison Homestead at Denison University in Ohio, Gould Farm in Monterey, Massachusetts, and the Living Village at the Yale Divinity School in New Haven, Connecticut. These cases gave us additional perspective on how

similar programs have evolved at different universities and highlighted how such communities can exist in diverse ways, depending on the location and the goals of the founders.

Methods

This objective was focused on creating case studies for four different communities. To do this we conducted multiple interviews and gathered information through articles and community websites. In the case of the Oregon Extension, we had the opportunity to interview Dr. Jamie Skillen, a professor at Calvin College and former staffer at the Oregon Extension Program. Another interview we were able to conduct was with Brian Snyder, the former director of Gould Farm and current executive director of the Initiative for Food and Agricultural Transformation (InFACT) at OSU. These interviews were held via zoom and answers were recorded in a master document. For each case study, we also gathered information from each community's website. We looked at the history of the community, the finances, and some of the best practices described in documents and articles published on their websites.

Data Collection

The Oregon Extension

The Oregon Extension was created by faculty at traditional religious universities who wanted a break from the hectic and reductionist patterns of 1970's college life. In 1975 a group of faculty from different universities collectively bought a property and committed to the endeavor together. The program semesters were broken down into lectures and research projects. This model worked for a couple of decades, but eventually, the financial underpinnings of the community came under more stress. The owner of Clif Bar subsequently bought the community and it was transformed into a nonprofit with two full-time faculty and a different financial model.

The original financial model is something that would be hard to replicate; in the 1990s colleges were willing to send money to the OE but changes to administrative and financial procedures at colleges and universities eventually made such payments unsustainable as a revenue source (J. Skillen, personal communication, October 11, 2021). Today up to 45 students can partake in the community every fall semester. Some of the best practices exemplified by this community include:

- Eliminating the role of dean or provost: a faculty chair oversees decisions
- Limiting the use of personal electronic devices during the week as a form of digital detox
- Assuring independence for students
- Discouraging students from bringing a personal car
- Engaging all students in 3 hours of service work every Friday
- Building a community with rituals
- Establishing a strong common goal or mission

Denison Homestead

The Denison Homestead started in 1977 as an experiment by Dr. Bob Altruz, a biology professor at Denison, and a group of students. They wanted to create an agriculturally based self-reliant democratic community, with environmentally sound materials. The community came together with faculty and students working together. It started with three cabins and 12 students, with the expectation that the cabins would be replaced every few years. In 1996 the Homestead Advisory Board was reestablished from the fear that it was on the brink of closing; without this, it might not have survived. In 2002 the Homestead created the Homestead Coordinator position as well as offering the Homestead as a credited experience with a one-credit seminar course (History of the Homestead). Today the Homestead hosts 12 students per semester to pursue a more sustainable lifestyle. Some key best practices from this community include:

- Taking turns preparing dinner (Saturday breakfast) to enjoy together as a community
- Supply produce and fresh eggs are supplied from the Homestead farm (Daily Life)

- Incorporating study spaces all around the community (Daily Life)
- Carrying out seasonal projects to improve the community (Responsibilities)
- Encouraging everyone to participate in daily maintenance (Responsibilities)

Gould Farm

Gould Farm is the oldest community we examined; it was established in 1913 as a healing community in Massachusetts, welcoming guests experiencing emotional and psychiatric vulnerabilities to partake in farm work. Today Gould Farm services all kinds of mental illnesses, with a work program including many enterprises (About Us, Gould Farm). The community accepts guests regardless of their financial status and allows them to pay only what they can afford. Today they accept government reimbursement for mental health care. In our interview with Brian Snyder, he explained that enterprises were added to increase revenue for the farm by selling farm produce, meat, dairy, and baked goods. These enterprises gave people job skills after leaving the community (B. Snyder, personal communication, October 18, 2021). There are about 120 people living on the farm which includes staff and their families. Some of the best practices from this community are:

- Top-down decision making
- Establishing a mission and core values to live by
- Incorporating enterprises to boost revenue
- Support mental health in a natural setting

The Living Village

The Living Village at the Yale Divinity School is set to break ground in 2023 and open in 2024 with high aspirations. The village is being marketed as the “largest residential living-building project in the education sector.” The village will be an affordable living option for students, housing 150 students. The community will be a part of the Greater International Living Future Institute, a global initiative to rethink sustainable residence (Ori). The Living Village has

been made possible by a \$15 million donation, the largest donation ever received by Yale Divinity School (Araujo-Hawkins). At present, this project would be the largest academic Living Building Challenge (LBC) project in the world (also the first in Connecticut and in the Ivy League), and aims to become the first Living Community Challenge certified campus.

Some of the intended practices for this community are:

- Potentially the first Living Community Challenge certified campus
- Fully zero-waste community
- Fully solar powered
- Water only used from rain collection

Data Analysis

Looking at all the data and information that we gathered through interviews and case studies we can propose a suite of ideas that would work and not work for an intentional community at Ohio State. We analyzed the best practices in the four communities, sifting out practices that seemed to apply only to another place irrelevant to the OSU context and highlighting those aspects that best fit the OSU community due to their similarities. Shared rituals and vision were mentioned in almost all the case studies. This is to create bonds and relationships among members, making living together easier and more enjoyable. This can also remind people why they are there and why they should get through their differences. Another best practice was giving members freedom and a voice in decision-making. This is important because it empowers residents and makes students feel they are an integral part of the community. We see this with the Oregon Extension and how they have a lot of freedom in the community. With Gould Farm, supporting mental health through contact with nature is very important when in a living community, especially with college students. From Yale Living Village, we can see that an idea like this could attract support including a large donation of

money or even land. And Gould Farm provides a helpful model for enterprises that can support the community, which could prove useful at OSU. Overall, these communities have had their ups and downs and have grown organically; this is something we are looking to emulate, starting small and growing as we grow. These communities foster interest in sustainability and an environment for further innovation.

Research Objective 2

For our second objective, we examined similar communities at OSU to see how they function and identified any challenges to implementing a sustainability community at OSU. We determined that SUSTAINS and ENR Scholars would be the best models for us to study based on their similar focus on sustainability and the natural world.

Methods

We conducted case studies on the SUSTAINS and ENR Scholars learning communities and key informant interviews with faculty and staff at OSU involved in the ERG to supplement our findings.

Data Collection

Through our case studies and interviews, we collected qualitative data on how the existing learning communities at OSU function and what potential barriers may exist in trying to implement this community at OSU.

SUSTAINS stands for Students Understanding Sustainability and Taking Action to Improve Nature. It is a learning community at OSU offered to underclassmen students interested in exploring sustainability outside of the classroom setting. Students in SUSTAINS participate in

networking events with sustainability professionals, going on a professional development trip to another city, and developing and implementing their own sustainability project on OSU's campus (*SUSTAINS Learning Community*). We interviewed Gina Jaquet, founder of SUSTAINS, to learn about the process of starting up a learning community at OSU. Gina explained that she did some benchmarking by examining other similar learning community models in the country and it was also important that she got input from students, which helped her not only understand what would appeal to them but also what factors would dissuade students from participating in the program. Speaking with other faculty members was important in figuring out the funding for the community, how it would fit into residence life, and if she had support behind the idea (G. Jaquet, personal communication, October 22, 2021). Through her thorough research, Gina put together a strong proposal for SUSTAINS focusing on the mission of the program, learning objectives, and overall outcomes.

Similar to SUSTAINS, ENR Scholars is offered to underclassmen at OSU but focuses more on exploring the natural world and conservation. Scholars live amongst each other in Morrill Tower and get to participate in learning activities relevant to environmental issues, go on outdoor recreation trips, work on service projects, and engage in leadership development events (*About Us*). We interviewed Esther DeBusk who was the coordinator of the ENR Scholars program for a couple of years. Esther shared with us that a "Scholars" program is different from a "learning community" at OSU in that Scholars get special recognition on their transcript that they completed a scholars program. While there are other differences, scholars and students in learning communities still participate in a variety of learning experiences and partake in networking events with faculty, staff, and other professionals in a certain field of interest. Esther

took pride in seeing alumni come back and crediting the Scholars community for providing them with the fundamental skills to be successful in college and beyond (E. DeBusk, personal communication, October 14, 2021).

Lastly, we spoke with Dr. Anna Willow, an environmental anthropologist and professor at the OSU Marion Campus. Anna explained the significant impact that nature plays on mental health, which is a topic we want to value in the community. She has noticed that young people are expressing their concerns about environmental issues and what the future will look like, causing anxiety and despair. Anna believes that something like a sustainability community would be a great opportunity for young people to take action on environmental issues and ease anxiety. Moreover, Anna thinks a sustainability community could attract more students to OSU who would otherwise go elsewhere (A. Willow, personal communication, October 13, 2021).

Data Analysis

Between our key informant interviews and case studies on similar communities at OSU, we synthesized the data into key themes we want to address. By listening to Gina's experience of starting up SUSTAINS, we understood the importance of gauging interest and opinions from various stakeholders to understand different perspectives and ideas. Accordingly, benchmarking of other communities was essential in Gina's research as it allowed her to base her ideas and vision of SUSTAINS off existing models like what we described in Objective 1 above. What stands out from Gina's process of starting up SUSTAINS is that she did not focus primarily on the day-to-day details of the community, but more on the outcomes and values that she wanted the program to deliver. Based on Gina's experience, we should consider what mission the sustainability community would strive for and the tangible outcomes we expect to see from

students living in the community. In our interview with Esther, we learned a lot about the shared governance of a community and the difficulty in delegating responsibilities and handling conflict. An issue that SUSTAINS and ENR Scholars commonly experience is first-year students losing interest in the community due to a lack of clarity when they applied for the communities as seniors in high school. This would make us wary of accepting underclassmen to the community because we would want dedicated students who are passionate about sustainability. However, aspects from learning communities such as professional development activities, networking events, and hands-on learning could easily be applied to the sustainability community. Admittedly, SUSTAINS and ENR Scholars are still working on becoming more diverse in their student population. Anna, Esther, and Gina all stressed the importance of strategically recruiting students for the sustainability community as diversity and inclusion should be one of the top values.

Research Objective 3

The purpose of this objective was to identify the number of interested students at OSU and to gauge their interests in different aspects of an intentional sustainability community.

Methods

The “Interest Survey: OSU Intentional Sustainability Community” was created in Qualtrics with the assistance of the ERG and distributed throughout the student body. During the creation of the survey, our group met on multiple occasions with Greg Hitzhusen, EEDS capstone course professor, to receive feedback and to determine the best questions to ask without taking too much of the respondents’ time. We sent the survey to our EEDS capstone class to receive preliminary survey results which helped preparations for data collection and analysis. We

then received feedback from the ERG that assisted our group in finalizing the seven-question survey. Gina Jaquet, an ERG member and Director of Sustainability Education and Learning at OSU (also interviewed above), assisted in the distribution of the survey. Survey distribution was focused on underclassmen by distributing the survey through professors teaching first and second-year courses but based on the survey promotion it is unlikely that the survey results represent the entirety of first and second-year students. With that being said, we were able to reach a large audience because the course professor of ENR 2100 offered extra credit to their students if they were to take the survey and our survey was also featured in OnCampus Weekly and the SENR Undergraduate Newsletter.

Results

Our survey received 775 responses within a 14-day period from October 25th to November 8th. The results of each survey question are described below. The survey started with a brief explanation of our project and ideas about the vision of the community.

“An Exploratory Research Group (ERG) sponsored by the Sustainability Institute at Ohio State is examining the opportunity to create an Intentional Sustainability Community that would provide a residential living experience for undergraduate OSU students (and possibly also for some faculty and staff). While the vision for this community is still taking shape, it would likely involve living in a natural (forest and farm) or re-purposed urban space within 10 miles of campus; the community would be an experiment in living sustainably and might include growing some percentage of the community’s food, establishing your own standards for community governance, building your own (sustainable) residential structures, and exploring sustainable transportation options. More information about this ERG can be found here: <https://si.osu.edu/forfaculty/ERG/IntentionalSustainabilityCommunity>. We are hoping to learn whether OSU students are interested in a living community like this, and if so, what aspects of such a community would interest you. This survey should take only a few minutes to complete - thank you for taking a moment to respond.”

Question 1.

“What is your major at Ohio State?”

The results we received from this question showed varying interest across many different majors. Most notable interest was from majors within the School of Environment and Natural Resources. We also received varying interest across majors that you may not think of being interested in this project including different business majors and undecided students. Please refer to Table 1 in Appendix C for the complete list of the majors of respondents from the *Interest Survey: OSU Intentional Sustainability Community* listed from highest to lowest based on the highest percent of yes respondents.

Question 2.

“Are you currently involved with anything sustainability-related? (clubs, organizations, classes, hobbies, lifestyle choices, etc) If so, what?”

We received 775 responses to the second question. Of those, 375 respondents commented that they are not involved in anything sustainability-related; 400 respondents commented that they are involved in sustainability in some way. The majority of respondents commented that they are learning about sustainability through their classes and coursework. Many respondents commented on lifestyle choices such as recycling, reusing, composting, vegan diet, and trying to live with low or zero waste. There were responses related to a wide range of Ohio State organizations, clubs, and sustainable services. There were many positive comments expressing interests in sustainability and the desire to get more involved. A few respondents commented on their interest in gardening. One respondent's comment sums it up the best:

“Yes, lifestyle choices. I limit single-use plastic use whenever possible, shop only secondhand clothing, repair my clothes, grocery shop with limiting waste in mind, compost and recycle, and my major in interior design is focused on sustainability.”

Question 3.

“Do you think you might be interested to live in an intentional sustainability community at OSU similar to what is described above?”

We received 775 responses to this question; 517 respondents answered yes, representing 67 percent of the responses and 258 respondents answered no, which represents 33 percent of the responses. Please refer to Table 2 in Appendix C for the results showing the total number of respondents and their respective answers to question three.

Question 4.

“Please rank the following qualities of an intentional sustainability community according to which qualities are most appealing to you (0=least appealing, 100=most appealing).”

The fourth question was only shown to respondents that answered yes for question three. Respondents were given eighteen qualities of an intentional sustainability community to rate on most appealing to least appealing. Affordability and a healthy way of life were the highest scoring community attributes. Please refer to Figure 1 in Appendix C for the average ratings of qualities of an intentional sustainability community.

Question 5.

“What are some factors that would prevent you from joining an intentional sustainability community at OSU? (choose all that apply)”

Respondents were given seven factors that could prevent students from joining an intentional sustainability community. The most notable factors would be the distance from campus, transportation, and missing out on social life around the main campus. Please refer to Figure 2 in Appendix C for a complete breakdown of the factors noted as preventing students from joining an intentional sustainability community.

Question 6.

“Is there anything else you’d like to add about any of the ideas above or your thoughts on a sustainability community at OSU? If so, type it here:”

The sixth question was only shown to respondents that answered yes for question three.

We received 175 responses; 55 respondents commented that they did not have any ideas to add and 120 respondents commented on a wide range of suggestions. We received comments on their interests in gardening within the community, an emphasis on composting, and the community could work on improving composting across campus. There was a lot of interest in being immersed in sustainability and the interest in hands-on working and learning. Respondents commented on the affordability of the community and that it needs to be a cheaper or comparable alternative to other housing options. Many respondents commented on concerns about transportation and the overall workload with an emphasis on the importance of reliable transportation. Security issues were mentioned if this was an off-campus living situation and the importance of safety for staff and students. One respondent's comment sums it up the best:

“I think this is an amazing idea to provide hands-on learning! To have firsthand experience on how to live sustainably and how to develop a community around those values is a once in a lifetime opportunity in this current climate.”

Question 7.

“If you would you be interested in a follow-up conversation to give further thoughts or to receive further information as the plans for this community develop, please enter your OSU email here:”

The seventh question was only shown to respondents that answered yes to question three.

We received 200 student emails of students interested in more information as the plans for this community develop.

Discussion

The survey helped us consider what qualities need to be prioritized and what issues need to be addressed in building an intentional community at OSU. The survey was incredibly useful for our project to show that there is great interest in an intentional sustainability community at OSU. There is interest from students representing many different majors, which suggests diverse appeal. The majority of respondents that took our survey were interested in this community and indicated what would be appealing about this community including affordability, living a healthy life, and immersive, hands-on experience that can help them in their future work. The survey was also useful because it showed what would be least appealing about this community and what it needs to avoid including minimal use of electronics and being isolated from the city or main campus. It also showed the importance of the location of the community and the need for reliable transportation. The responses to this survey provide some preliminary answers to questions about student interest in this community at OSU and raise some additional questions that could be answered by future work. The 200 email addresses we received could be used to receive more direct feedback from interested students in the future, and the results from our survey can help direct future analysis by the ERG and capstone students researching options for this community.

Recommendations

Based on our interviews, case studies, and survey results, we propose the following recommendations and practices for building an intentional sustainability community at OSU. We analyzed the case studies, survey results and summarized the interviews with an eye to assessing aspects worth adopting and avoiding. We suggest that the community should establish a common goal that focuses on sustainable living and mental health for both students and faculty. A

common goal helps the residents of the community to understand exactly what they are pursuing and realize their self-values while working hard to achieve their goals. The community should be inclusive and welcome people from different backgrounds, cultures, and religions. Therefore, community activities can provide residents good opportunities to communicate and learn new ideas from each other. We recommend establishing shared rituals or routines for all residents through weekly meals as a community. This is a good time for everyone to relax and discuss various topics. In addition to weekly meals, participation in outreach activities is also encouraged, such as campus involvement events and workshops, so as to avoid isolation and provide students with more learning opportunities to enrich their experiences. We encourage juniors and seniors to join this community for credits. Compared with freshmen and sophomores, upper-level students are not required to live in on-campus dorms, and they can benefit more from this community-based project and from opportunities based on their understanding of majors and career paths. According to our survey results, most students do not want the community to be far away from the main campus so that they can still socialize as if they were living on or near campus. Students can also get more hands-on and in-depth learning experiences different from ordinary classes, such as farming and gardening. We also have three possible locations for creating this community and analyzed the advantages and disadvantages of these locations respectively.

Waterman Living Lab

The Waterman Agricultural and Natural Resources Laboratory is located to the west of the main campus, covers 261 acres, and offers a wide range of college credit courses including,

but not limited to agriculture, veterinary medicine, and equipment operations while also providing unlimited educational resources for agriculture and environment practices (Waterman).

We recommend building new housing of apartments and tiny house dorm styles. Based on the existing buildings and areas in Waterman, it is possible to repurpose these buildings and establish a new community. Waterman is not too far from the main campus buildings, so we propose to expand the Cabs Bus service and provide bicycles for residents for transportation options. Residents can have more hands-on experience with farming and growing their own food based on the highly valued agricultural resources and space in Waterman. Support from Dean Kress of the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences (CFAES) would be necessary to access and utilize Waterman to build the community.

Don Scott Farm

The Don Scott farm was mentioned a lot by the Exploratory Research Group as a possible location. Being close to the Don Scott airport makes this the furthest option we are recommending. This location, much like Waterman, provides ample green space with room to grow and garden. This would mean building housing that would most likely look like cabins or something like dorms. With this type of space, there is room to start small with the intention of growing and adding more housing. This community would most likely look a lot like that of a community at Waterman, the only difference being the distance from the main campus. With distance being a downside, there should be a bus route added to take students to campus, with the possibility of more routes being added later. Another type of transportation would be bikes provided to the students as a more sustainable mode of transportation (30-40 minute ride from the main campus).

Repurposed Urban Space

If some urban buildings were available for use by this community, the focus could be aimed at re-purposing urban space and adding sustainable features within an urban landscape. With the limitation of urban space, there would be less natural space than Waterman or Don Scott and residents may have less hands-on experiences with farming, but it would also provide space and opportunities to improve sustainability in urban areas. An intentional community in the urban area could be closer to the main campus, and there would be a bus route for residents to take or they could simply walk to campus. Given an urban space, we would recommend that residents build urban garden rooftops and be more intentional with living sustainably.

Next Steps

With the limited time we have in this class, we have just scratched the surface on a project that could potentially be very big at OSU. We know that there is definitely work to be done with a future capstone class. Next semester we see another group taking our work and going further with it. This could include a feasibility study for OSU to see if a community like this is even possible. There is room to do a more in-depth survey of a diverse cross-section of students and their interests. A big step that needs to be taken is looking further into possible locations and framing this project in a way that attracts support.

Conclusion

After conducting case studies, informant interviews, and a survey, we believe that it is possible to build an intentional sustainability community at OSU. Through our three research objectives, we analyzed and summarized factors and conditions that have led to successful

establishment and other operations in other sustainability communities, and we have explored potential obstacles that OSU needs to overcome in building such a community. Our survey results show that OSU undergraduate students are interested in this community project and highlight which features students would prefer regarding how the community might function. We believe that strong support from faculty and staff can help us overcome barriers that might hinder the establishment and operation of an intentional community at OSU. Our results are at an early stage, but our ultimate goal is to provide information that can lead to the successful establishment of this community. This report can provide sufficient information for future students who can conduct another Capstone project, (as early as Spring 2022!) and further examine the feasibility of an intentional community at OSU. If the community is successfully established, students will benefit from hands-on experience and deep learning of sustainability that would help them to become future advocates for sustainable living.

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Appendix A: Interviewees and Questions Asked

Data Set #1: MasterInterviewDoc.doc

This appendix describes the questions asked from each interview. Interviews were conducted by the capstone group team members over unrecorded Zoom video calls. To request the full notes from each interview described below, contact hitzhusen.3@osu.edu.

Gina Jaquet - Director of Sustainability Education and Learning at OSU & Founder of SUSTAINS

Questions Asked on October 22nd, 2021

1. Why did you join this ERG and what do you want to see from this project?
2. Could you describe your role in sustains now? And talk a little more about how sustains works?
3. What support did you get from the university and was it difficult creating sustains? Any challenges?
4. In your experience what has attracted students to Sustains and what do you think would attract students to our proposed community?
5. Benefits of getting a community together of like-minded individuals?
6. Greatest successes of Sustains or something that you think is the most important piece of it?
7. Do you see any major barriers at OSU that could potentially be a problem?
8. We want to be as inclusive as possible in our community. What do you find to be the best way to promote diversity in a community like sustains or a living community?

Brian Snyder - Executive Director of InFact at Ohio State & Former Gould Farm Director

Questions Asked on October 18th, 2021

1. How did you first hear about Gould Farm and why did you want to get involved?
2. How is the farm governed? Has it evolved over the years?
3. Were there any new aspects or programs of the farm that you introduced or oversaw during your tenure as the director?
4. What do you attribute to the long-term success of Gould Farms?

5. Do you see any potential barriers to implementing our proposed community?
6. Any advice or ideas moving forward?

Dr. Jamie Skillen - Professor at Calvin College & Former Staff of the Oregon Extension

Questions Asked on October 11th, 2021

1. Could you describe your role at the extension and how you became a part of the program?
2. What draws people to the community in your opinion?
3. It seems like this program is unique to other communities as it is not directly connected to one university. Could you describe how the community functions and how students become a part of it?
4. Just recently the Oregon extension students removed invasive plants on a nearby creek trail. Is that something you ever took part in? Are there activities or any volunteer work involved inside or outside of the community?
5. Students had limited access to electronics. How did they respond to that?
6. Community governance - how does the community make decisions? Are students involved in that?
7. Do you have any specific advice for those who would try to start a similar community at Ohio State?

Dr. Anna Willow - Environmental Anthropologist & Professor at OSU Marion Campus

Questions Asked on October 13th, 2021

1. Why did you join this ERG and what do you want to see from this project?
2. We are looking to incorporate mental health as a priority in this community. Have you seen a correlation between improved mental health and living in nature? How do intentional communities benefit mental health?
3. Do you think a community like this would attract students who otherwise wouldn't be interested in coming to Columbus?
4. Do you think students at satellite campuses would be interested in coming to Columbus for an intentional community?
5. Do you see any major barriers at OSU that could potentially be a problem?
6. Are you familiar with the Columbus campus? Where could this community be located? Could a satellite campus be better-suited for this type of community?
7. How can we make sure our community is inclusive?
8. Any advice or ideas?

Esther DeBusk - Student Engagement and Recruitment at OSU & Former Coordinator of ENR Scholars Program

Questions Asked on October 14th, 2021

1. Why did you join this ERG and what do you want to see from this project?
2. What is your involvement with ENR scholars? How did it get started and how does it run?
3. In your experience, how have you navigated managing a community composed of staff and students?
4. In your experience what has attracted students to ENR scholars and what do you think would attract students to our proposed community?
5. Do you find that students living together in ENR scholars encourage them to focus on their studies and participate more in the ENR community?
6. Benefits of getting a community together of like-minded individuals?
7. Greatest successes of ENR scholars or something that you think is the most important piece of it?
8. Do you see any major barriers at OSU that could potentially be a problem?
9. Do you think this would be better suited for freshmen to get them interested in ENR or more for upperclassmen to help advance their studies?
10. Have you experienced any issues with participation in involvement requirements for ENR scholars?
11. Any advice or ideas moving forward?

Appendix B: Survey Data Sets

Data Set #2: InterestSurveyResults.xls

Source: Qualtrics, Online Survey Software

Description: This data set includes the survey results from “Interest Survey: OSU Intentional Sustainability Community” for questions one, three, four, and five.

Data Set #3: SurveyQuestion2Results.doc

Source: Qualtrics, Online Survey Software

Description: This data set includes the survey results from “Interest Survey: OSU Intentional Sustainability Community” for question two.

Data Set #4: SurveyQuestion6Results.doc

Source: Qualtrics, Online Survey Software

Description: This data set includes the survey results from “Interest Survey: OSU Intentional Sustainability Community” for question six.

Data Set #5: SurveyQuestion7Results.doc

Source: Qualtrics, Online Survey Software

Description: This data set includes the survey results from “Interest Survey: OSU Intentional Sustainability Community” for question seven.

Appendix C: Survey Results

Major (n=)	Yes	% Yes
FFW (17)	16	94%
Biology (9)	8	89%
EEDS (68)	57	84%
Environmental Science (49)	41	84%
History (10)	8	80%
Economics (38)	28	74%
EPDM(17)	12	71%
Political Science (12)	8	67%
Psychology (26)	17	65%
CSE (37)	24	65%
Undecided (51)	31	61%
Marketing (21)	12	57%
Accounting (14)	8	57%
NRM (13)	7	54%
Business (14)	6	43%
Finance (48)	19	40%

Table 1. Majors of respondents from the Interest Survey: OSU Intentional Sustainability Community listed from highest to lowest based on the highest percent of yes respondents from question three.

Yes	67%	517
No	33%	258
Total		775

Table 2. Results of the total number of respondents and their respective answers to question three.



Figure 1. Average ratings of qualities of an intentional sustainability community listed from highest to lowest average rating

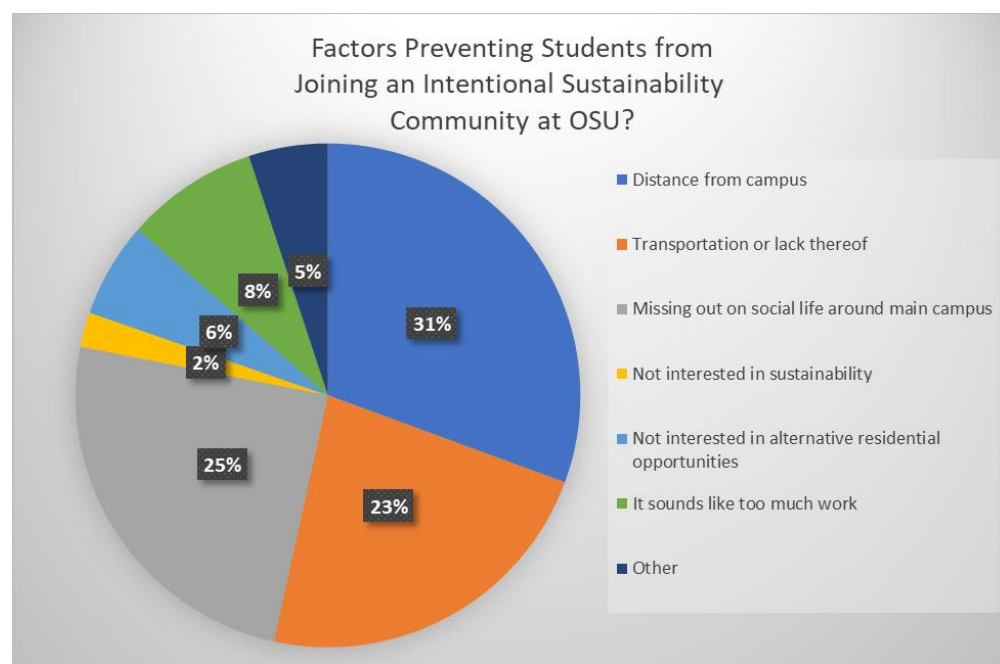


Figure 2. Factors preventing students from joining an intentional sustainability community